BUSINESS EDUCATION THROUGH BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

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Business communication awareness is critical to the efforts of Belarus as an economy in transition as well as an important part of business education in the country. University students, especially those majoring in business administration and international business, badly need to acquire business communication skills which are indispensable for them to be able to create positive attitude and avoid tension and all kinds of “faux pas” in communication.

What needs to be considered as a priority is learning how to think through writing or speaking tasks, i.e. by using a practical approach. This approach can be implemented through stressing communication theories and techniques for effective communication in diverse business situations.

It is also desirable to think of business communication as presenting a problem for which there may be no one right answer. The most basic questions to ask oneself are as follows: «What is the reason for communicating?» and «Who is my audience?»

Business communication usually has one of two general purposes: to inform or to persuade. Failure to be more specific about the reason for communicating results in failed exchanges, e.g.: the customer service clerk who sends a requested refund, but annoys a customer in the process.

The course to be designed needs to orient students at most common reasons why people in business communicate with others. Those reasons can be action-oriented or have more to do with a general response from the receiver: to ask or to give more information; to explain; to issue instructions; to advise or recommend; to thank or congratulate; to foster an atmosphere of goodwill; to improve the company’s image; to create a good impression of oneself.

Students need to go beyond what they want to do and focus on the response they want from the receiver. Assessing the receiver is absolutely necessary not to fall into “a communication trap”. According to Margot Northey, the following should be considered: the receiver’s benefit from your
communication; the receiver’s position, knowledge and personality; possible areas of misunderstanding; any past dealings between you; the receiver’s environment. In designing a course of Business Communication, it is necessary to have in mind both what skills need to be developed and how this can be accomplished.

The significance of business education through enhancing business communication awareness and skills in the country is many-fold:

First and foremost, students of business administration and international business will finally be taught a course of Business Communication that has never before been taught in the country and is vitally important for the future policy- and decision makers.

Secondly, the dissemination of the materials accumulated during the program will enable me to share experience with my colleagues from other universities in Belarus at professional meetings and conferences, which will encourage them to think of the necessity to re-assess the existing system of education in terms of including Business Communication course as part of business education into their schools’ curriculum. In this context, the coordination of the efforts on the part of educational authorities and instructors of all levels is indeed very important.

Thirdly, due to the combined efforts, the companies’ managers will finally realize the necessity of giving up the so-called business speak and turn to normal, customer-oriented business communication, without which no business can be successfully done. It is also a way to eliminate numerous «faux pas» and even conflicts arising in the process of using an inappropriate style of communication. So, in fact, it can become an instrument of the country’s social development.

All the above, hopefully, will enhance business communication awareness in Belarus, which eventually will bring the country to a normal way of social and economic development and equal relations with the rest of the world.

Business education through business communication is sure to foster mutual understanding between cultures and nations as well as add to better understanding how the private sector operates in the restrictive environment of Belarus and how local businesses interact with their partners in the other states of the former Soviet Union and the rest of the world. This might be of considerable importance for attracting investors to the country’s economy as well as contributing to the improvement the country’s image on the international arena.